

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
ACDA-07 IO-13 EB-08 OES-06 FEA-01 INT-05 ERDA-05
COME-00 TRSE-00 /103 W
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FM USMISSION USBERLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4229
AMEMBASSY BONN
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 0757

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, PINS, ENRG, EWWT, WB, GW, GE
SUBJECT: NEW GDR REGULATION ON PASSAGE OF OIL BARGES THROUGH EAST
BERLIN.

REF. BONN 4330

1. SENAT CHANCELLERY CHIEF HERZ IN MEETING WITH ALLIED
LIAISON OFFICERS ON MARCH 15 SPECULATED ON REASONS FOR GDR
REGULATION MAY 1 REQUIRING DEGASSING OF EMPTY OIL
BARGES TRANSITTING EAST BERLIN. HE SUGGESTED THAT THERE
PROBABLY WERE GENUINE CONCERNS ON PART OF GDR AND EAST
BERLIN AUTHORITIES OVER POSSIBILITY OF BARGE EXPLODING
WHILE IN EAST BERLIN WATERS. HERZ ADDED THAT SOMEONE
IN EAST BERLIN MAY HAVE HAD NIGHTMARE OVER POSSIBILITY
OF WINDOWS OF NEW PALACE OF REPUBLIC (FACADE IS MOSTLY
GLASS) BEING BLOWN OUT BY EXPLODING BARGE SINCE BUILDING
IS ONLY ABOUT 70 YARDS FROM SPREE.

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2. HERZ SAID THAT IT COULD ALSO NOT BE DISCOUNTED THAT
NEW MEASURE WAS DESIGNED TO MAKE OIL SHIPMENTS BY BARGE
SO DIFFICULT THAT THEY WOULD BE SWITCHED TO RAIL, WHICH
WOULD INCREASE REICHSBAHN REVENUES. OTHER POSSIBLE
REASONS WERE THAT IT WAS PART OF RECENT SERIES OF
MEASURES TO ENHANCE STATUS OF EAST BERLIN, OR THAT IT WAS

PRESSURE TO GET TELTOW CANAL TALKS MOVING.

3. ACCORDING TO HERZ, THERE IS A STEAM FACILITY AT GASAG (BERLIN GAS COMPANY) PLANT IN MARIENDORF WHICH MIGHT BE USED TO STEAM CLEAN BARGES. HE WAS UNAWARE OF WHETHER THIS COULD BE OPERATIONAL BY MAY. HERZ DID NOT SEEM UNDULY ALARMED BY NEW REGULATION AND INDICATED THAT ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT MEANS WERE BEING INVESTIGATED.

4. REPORT OF NEW REGULATION APPEARED IN BERLINER MOREGENPOST MARCH 15 AND WAS FIRST NEWS WHICH SHIPPING TRADE HAD HAD OF IMPENDING PROBLEM, ALTHOUGH SENAT HAS KNOWN OF IT SINCE 1 FEBRUARY. PRESS REPORTS VARY AS TO JUST WHAT IS AFFECTED, APPARENTLY ONLY THOSE BARGES HAULING GASOLINE, LIGHT NAPHTHA FOR GASWORKS, AND POSSIBLY KEROSENE THROUGH EAST BERLIN TO THE TELTOW CANAL. CITING SOURCES IN BONN, MORENPOST STATES ONLY 120 BARGE TRIPS PER YEAR ARE AFFECTED, INVOLVING ONLY 10 PERCENT OF BERLIN'S OVERALL PETROLEUM SUPPLY. TAGESSPIEGEL MARCH 15 QUOTED SENAT SPOKESMAN STRUVE TO EFFECT THAT AS PROBLEM WAS ONE OF TRANSIT TRAFFIC, IT WAS RESPONSIBILITY OF FRG, NOT SENAT TO DISCUSS WITH GDR. TAGESSPIEGEL NOTED THAT PERMREP GAUS HAD BEEN UNABLE THUS FAR TO OBTAIN APPOINTMENT WITH RESPONSIBLE EAST GERMAN OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS MATTER. PAPER ALSO SPECULATED THAT SINCE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR DEGASSING FACILITY TO BE CONSTRUCTED BY MAY 1, DELIVERIES OF OIL TO TELTOW CANAL FACILITIES SUCH AS MARIENDORF GAS WORKS AND BARNACKUFER POWER PLANT COULD BE THREATENED. (COMMENT: CONFIDENTIAL

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SPECULATION RE POWER PLANT PROBABLY IN ERROR SINCE IT BURNS FUEL OIL). TAGESSPIEGEL ALSO SUGGESTED THAT ONE RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVE METHOD OF DEALING WITH PROBLEM WOULD BE TO FILL VESSELS (FOLLOWING DISCHARGE OF OIL CARGO) WITH STACKGAS, NITROGEN OR CARBON DIOXIDE FOR PERIOD OF TRANSIT THROUGH EAST BERLIN. PAPER REPORTED THAT ESTIMATED COST FOR STEAM-CLEANING EACH VESSEL RANGED FROM DM2500 TO 3000 (SAME FIGURES CITED PARA 4 REFTEL).

5. COMMENT: DIMENSIONS OF PROBLEM SHOULD BE CLARIFIED SHORTLY. WHILE EARLY DEADLINE AND COST OF DEGASSING OPERATION WILL BE A NUISANCE, WE CURRENTLY SEE NO REASON FOR CONCERN OVER BERLIN'S FUEL SUPPLY. ALTERNATIVES ARE AVAILABLE SUCH AS UNLOADING MORE GASOLINE IN NORTHWEST OF BERLIN WHERE PASSAGE THROUGH EAST BERLIN NOT REQUIRED, GREATER USE OF RAIL, SUBSTITUTION OF COAL FOR LIGHT NAPHTHA IN GASWORKS, AND FINALLY, TEMPORARY RECOURSE TO THE EMERGENCY STOCKPILE IF NECESSARY.
GEORGE

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 17-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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